

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants respond herein to the Final Office Action dated October 10, 2006.

Applicants' attorneys appreciate the Examiner's thorough search and examination of the present patent application and thank the Examiner for allowing claims 1-4, 6, 7, 9-11, 21 and 25-32.

Claims 1-4, 6, 7, 9-17, 19, 21 and 23-32 are pending in this application. Claims 5, 8, 18, 20, 22 and 33-35 have been withdrawn from consideration. Claims 12, 13, 15-17, 19 and 23 have been rejected. Claims 14 and 24 have been objected to.

Claims 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 19 and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,234,086 to Mason ("Mason") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,582,305 to Howell, Sr. et al. ("Howell").

Claims 14 and 24 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

In response, objected to claim 14 was placed in independent form. Claim 14 was amended to include all of the limitations of claim 12 and intervening claim 13. Claim 12 was amended to include the limitations of objected to claim 24. Claim 24 was cancelled.

Thus, Applicants' independent claims 12 and 14 are now allowable. Claims 13, 15-17, 19, and 23 depend directly or indirectly from allowable independent claim 12 and are, therefore, allowable for the same reasons, as well as because of the combination of features in those claims with the features set forth in the respective independent claims.

The Examiner's attention is also directed to an Information Disclosure Statement file on December 5, 2006.

Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the application, allow the claims as amended and pass this case to issue.

THIS CORRESPONDENCE IS BEING
SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY THROUGH
THE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE EFS
FILING SYSTEM ON December 11, 2006.

Respectfully submitted,



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